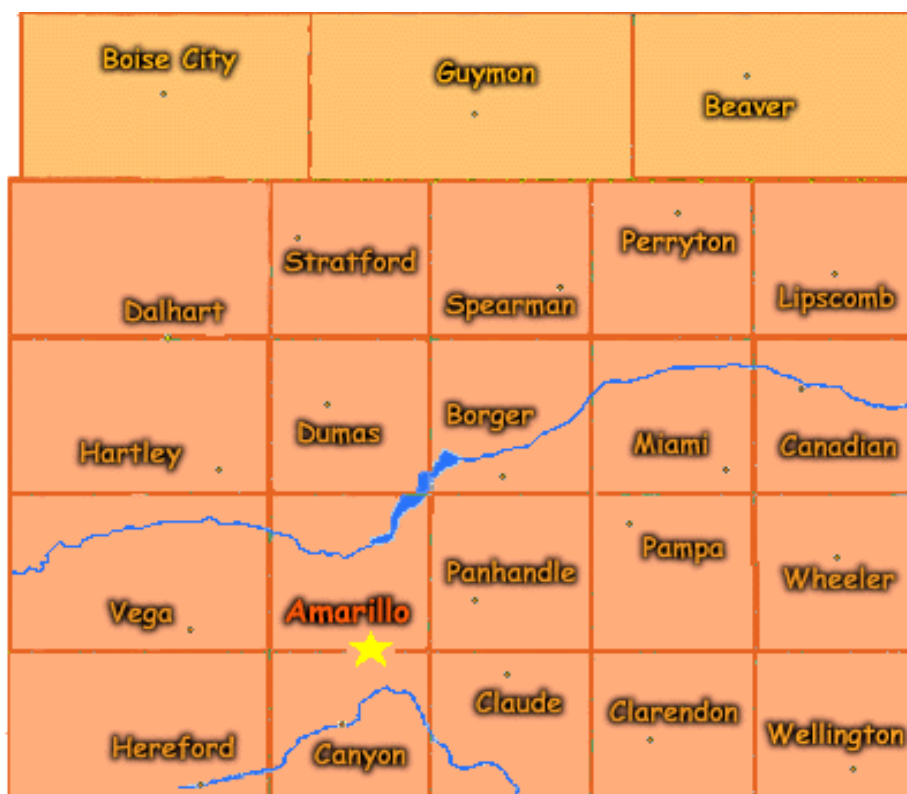


# **Organization and Operations Manual**

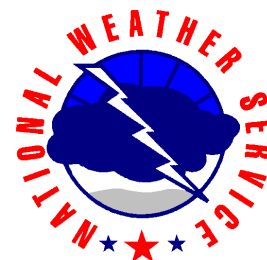
## Texas & Oklahoma Panhandles StormReady Advisory Board



National Weather Service  
 1900 English Rd  
 Amarillo, TX 79108

806 335-1121

Updated: February 2002



# StormReady

## Overview

Many laws and regulations have been created to help local emergency managers deal with hazardous material spills, search and rescue operations, medical crises, etc., but there are relatively few uniformly-recognized standards dealing with the specifics of hazardous weather response operations. Recognizing this need, the National Weather Service (NWS), has designed a pilot program to help cities, counties, and towns implement procedures to reduce the potential for disastrous, weather-related, consequences. By participating in this project, called “The StormReady Program,” local agencies can earn accreditation for their jurisdiction by meeting criteria established by the NWS in partnership with federal, state, and local emergency management professionals. The StormReady criteria are intended to:

- Improve the timeliness and effectiveness of hazardous weather warnings for the public.

- Provide detailed and clear recommendations by which local emergency managers might establish/improve effective hazardous weather operations.

- Help local emergency managers justify costs and purchases related to supporting their hazardous weather-related program.

- Reward those local, hazardous-weather mitigation programs that have achieved a desired performance level.

- Provide a means of acquiring additional Community Rating System points assigned by the Insurance Services Organization (ISO). (This is currently under consideration by ISO officials.)

- Provide an “image incentive” to counties, cities, and towns that can identify themselves as being “storm wise.”

- Encourage the enhancement of hazardous weather preparedness programs in locations surrounding “StormReady Communities/Counties.”

StormReady is a voluntary program, and is being offered as a means of providing guidance and incentive to officials interested in improving their respective hazardous weather operations. **Implied or explicit references to “requirements” are made with regard to the voluntary participants in the StormReady program and should not be construed as being state or federal mandates.**

## **StormReady**

### **National Organization**

Over-site of the StormReady program is accomplished within the NWS by a National StormReady board composed of:

National Warning Coordination Meteorologist (WCM) Program Leader  
(NWSHQ)

NWS Eastern Region WCM Program Leader

NWS Southern Region WCM Program Leader

NWS Central Region WCM Program Leader

NWS Western Region WCM Program Leader

NWS Alaska Region WCM Program Leader

NWS Pacific Region WCM Program Leader

This board is responsible for liaison activities with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and national emergency management organizations. The primary mission of the National StormReady board is to maintain a set of accreditation criteria that is consistent across the country with regard to technology, while at the same time allowing for focused flexibility in terms of planning and preparedness activities.

Proposed changes to the StormReady criteria shall be directed to the National StormReady Board for action. Existing and proposed criteria are reviewed at the board's annual meeting, with updated criteria formally published by the board on or before October 1st of each federal fiscal year.

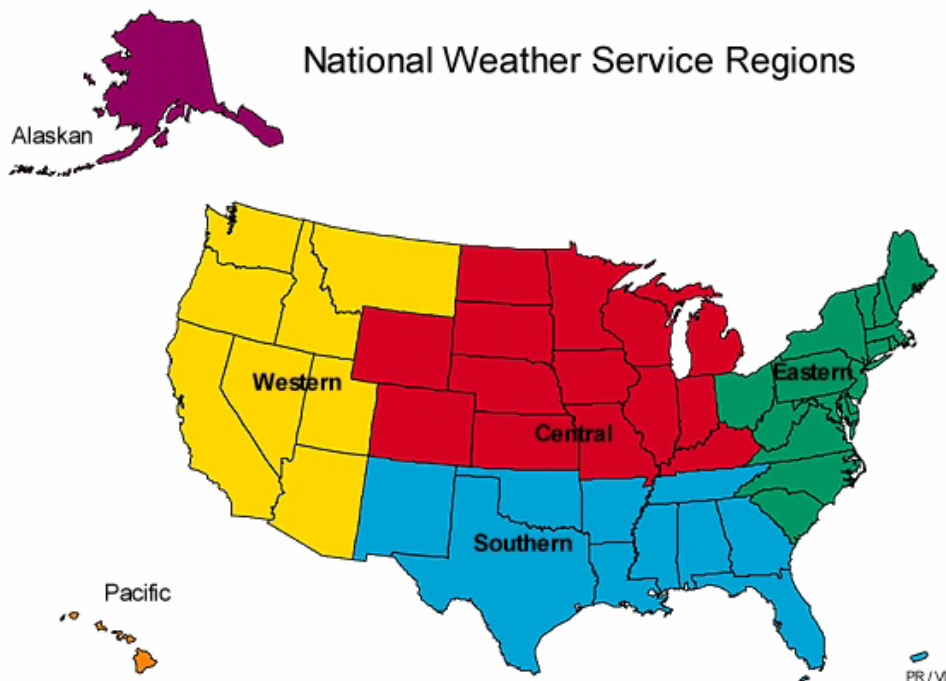
## StormReady Regional Organization

Each of the NWS's six regional offices shall develop a regional StormReady board, consisting of:

Regional Warning Coordination Meteorologist Program Leader

Regional StormReady boards shall monitor the activities of local boards, ensure that the spirit of the national criteria is maintained, forward proposed criteria modifications to the national level and, with formal recommendations from a local board, make final accreditation decisions within their region.

Regional StormReady boards shall meet quarterly.



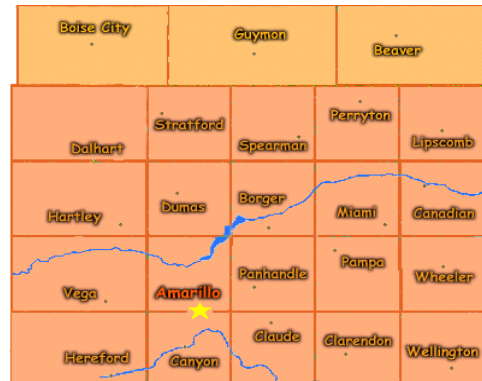
# **StormReady**

## **Local Organization**

### **Section 1.0**

#### **Texas & Oklahoma Panhandle StormReady Area**

The NWS office in Amarillo, TX serves 23 counties in the Texas and Oklahoma Panhandle. (Appendix A). This service area (CWA) delineates the jurisdiction of the Texas and Oklahoma Panhandles Advisory Board, referred to hereafter as the Amarillo StormReady Advisory Board.



### **Section 2.0**

#### **Amarillo StormReady Advisory Board for the Texas & Oklahoma Panhandles**

The Amarillo StormReady Advisory Board is comprised of:

- NWS Amarillo Meteorologist in Charge
- NWS Amarillo Warning Coordination Meteorologist
- State Coordinator, Texas Department of Public Safety-Emergency Management Service, or appointee
- Oklahoma Civil Emergency Management Agency Director or appointee
- 2 Local Texas Emergency Management Officials Representing 1 Large and 1 Small Community within the Amarillo NWS County Warning Area
- 1 Local Oklahoma Emergency Management Official within the Amarillo NWS County Warning Area

Additional local Emergency Managers or other potential board members must be approved by the current local Advisory Board.

This cross-section of officials gives the Amarillo StormReady Board representation from local, state and federal agencies that deal directly with disaster planning and emergency hydrometeorological situations (Appendix B).

## Section 2.1

### Amarillo StormReady Board By-Laws

Each board member serves on the board until resignation or replacement by the appointing organization / agency.

The local board is charged with developing and administering the Storm Ready program through the localization of the national criteria, establishing procedures for verification visits, developing by-laws for the board's activities and instituting a procedure for application review and action.

Each local board shall elect a Chairperson, who serves until resignation or a until a 2/3 or greater vote for removal occurs with a quorum of members present.

Local boards shall normally meet once each quarter. Regularly scheduled meetings will usually occur on the second Wednesday of February, May, August and November. The Board Chair reserves the right to call special meetings or conference calls. The November meeting should be considered the annual criteria review meeting with the Amarillo Board publishing new criteria by January 1 of the coming year. Meetings may be conducted via a conference call. The minutes from the previous meeting and the agenda for the next meeting shall be forwarded to all board members at least 10 days before the next scheduled meeting.

A quorum of board members must be present to conduct normal business. Normal business does not include "board actions", which are defined as any action concerning board membership or certification. A quorum is defined as one-half or more of the board members present. Board members may send a representative, which will count towards a quorum, **only** if the board member representative possesses a full written proxy. Proxy votes are not permitted on board actions, but will count on normal business items.

Board actions require a two-thirds majority vote of all members. Normal business items require a two-thirds vote of the quorum. If a board action cannot be resolved by a two-thirds majority vote at the business meeting, board members not present will have 7 working days to cast a vote. The chair, or his representative, will notify and seek the vote of members not present within two business days of the meeting, either by telephone or email.

## **Section 3.0**

### **Amarillo StormReady Application Process**

Application for StormReady accreditation is a formal process requiring a written application, a verification visit, local board action and as required, regional board accreditation.

## **Section 3.1**

### **Application Submission**

Any county or community in the NWS Amarillo CWA desiring to be considered for StormReady accreditation should prepare a written application following the categories outlined in Appendix G and submit it to:

National Weather Service  
1900 English Rd.  
Amarillo, TX 79108

Attn: StormReady Chairperson

Some applicants will have jurisdiction over both a community and the unincorporated areas of the surrounding county. In these cases, a single application is sufficient, with the combined populations used as a basis for determining the appropriate criteria categories.

While much of the application is a basic accounting of technology, a brief narrative describing aspects of preparedness and planning activities is necessary and will aid in assessing such things as the hazardous weather plan, exercises and public safety programs. When addressing aspects of an exercise, FEMA form 95-44 (Appendix D) may be used as a guide.

The application will be duplicated by the StormReady Board Chairperson and provided to each board member. The StormReady Chairperson shall assign a team to visit the applicant and formally discuss the application.

## **Section 3.2**

### **Amarillo StormReady Verification Visit**

A verification team of no less than 2 members shall be assembled by the Amarillo StormReady Chairperson to visit an applicant. The verification team should be composed of at least one NWS person, one member of the StormReady Advisory Board (SAB), and one person currently involved in emergency management. All members of a Amarillo StormReady verification team, that are not part of the SAB, must have board approval. It is recommended that a pre-approved list be developed of those individuals qualified to be part of a verification team.

During the verification visit, a Site Visit Summary (Appendix F) shall be completed separately and signed by each member of the team. During the site visit, a review of the applicant's hazardous weather plan will occur. This review may require the applicant to explain procedures to ensure that the content meets StormReady Criteria. A full copy of the applicant's Hazardous Weather Plan does not need to be submitted to the Amarillo StormReady Advisory Board; however, the verification team may request a copy for further review.

**\*\*\*The Amarillo SAB and all members involved in an Amarillo StormReady Verification visit are to reserve comments regarding any details of the visit within the team. Any media or external requests for information shall be referred to the SAB Chairperson or his designee.**

## **Section 3.3**

### **Amarillo StormReady Advisory Board Review**

Upon completing a site visit, the team shall forward to the board their Site Visit Summaries, along with any additional comments or documentation deemed pertinent. While the visitation team does not formally make recommendations concerning an applicant's accreditation, the comments and findings forwarded to the StormReady Advisory Board are crucial to process and are the foundation for all decisions made.

During the next scheduled Amarillo StormReady Advisory Board meeting, the status of all applicants shall be reviewed for the ultimate purpose of making recommendations to the NWS Southern Region StormReady Advisory Board. Regardless of the outcome of the review process, the StormReady Advisory Board will in writing inform the applicant of their status, and when necessary, detail information on improvements to achieve accreditation.



## **Section 3.4**

### **StormReady Criteria Policy Statements**

During the course of the Advisory Board's review of applications, it is necessary for the Board to make judgements concerning unique technologies, procedures and situations. These judgements must be made in terms of StormReady criterion (Appendix C) for the purposes of determining an applicants request for accreditation.

The following policy statements are made for the record by the Amarillo StormReady Advisory Board and are subject to annual revision:

- ▶ Emergency operations centers (EOCs) are, for the purposes of the StormReady Program, formal command and control facilities and are not evaluated on their level of protection, survivability or livability.
- ▶ Mobile command facilities can not take the place of an EOC.
- ▶ EOCs and warning points (WPs) must be in either separate locations or the EOC must be below ground and beneath the warning point to reduce the loss of redundancy in the event of a disaster. The warning point does not necessarily have to be a permanent facility or a designated physical location.
- ▶ Meteorological instruments need not be at the EOC or WP, but the ability to monitor current conditions must be demonstrated.

## **Section 3.5**

### **The Accreditation Process**

When in the opinion of the Amarillo StormReady Advisory Board an applicant has met the criteria for accreditation, a formal recommendation for accreditation shall be forwarded to the NWS Southern Region Advisory Board for action.

Disagreements between the Amarillo Board and the Regional Board shall be arbitrated by the NWS Southern Region Chief of the Climate, Water, and Weather Services. A final appeal by the Amarillo Board may be made to the NWS Southern Region Director. Decisions of the Regional Director are final.

Notification of an accreditation shall be given by the Regional Advisory Board to the Amarillo Board for a joint announcement by the Amarillo Board and the applying jurisdiction.

The successful applicant will receive a formal notification letter from the NWS Amarillo Meteorologist in Charge, two StormReady signs suitable for display along roadways (four for combined community / county applicants), authorization to use the StormReady logo, instructions for acquiring additional roadway signs, and information concerning the notification of the Insurance Services Organization (ISO) for possible adjustment to insurance rates (Section 3.8).

Cost for the initial roadway signs (either two or four) shall be charged to the NWS Amarillo operational budget.

Accreditation shall be for a period of three years from the date of the formal announcement. See Section 3.10 for details concerning re-accreditation.

## **Section 3.6**

### **Accreditation Ceremony**

Details of the accreditation announcement and ceremony shall be coordinated between the applicant and the Amarillo NWS Office.

A typical ceremony would require a formal media announcement and should be a combination of the unveiling of the StormReady roadway signs and a subsequent press conference. See Appendix E for a sample ceremony program.

## **Section 3.7**

### **Insurance Services Organization (ISO)**

Accredited jurisdictions participating in the National Flood Insurance Program can receive Community Rating Points (CRS) towards lowering flood insurance rates. StormReady communities / counties should forward a copy of their accreditation letter to their ISO representative for details.

## **Section 3.8**

### **Accreditation Monitoring**

While a formal plan to monitor an accredited jurisdiction is not presently deemed necessary, if a formal concern is brought to the Amarillo StormReady Advisory Board, the board shall review the concern and has the authority to have the jurisdiction re-apply prior to the end of two years.

## **Section 3.9**

### **Re-Accreditation**

StormReady accreditations are valid for three years from the date of the formal announcement / ceremony. The Amarillo StormReady Advisory Board shall, six months prior to the expiration of the accreditation, notify accredited jurisdictions in writing of their need to re-apply. Applicable criteria shall be those in affect at the time of the notification, and not necessarily the time of the accreditation anniversary.

It is the goal of the Amarillo StormReady Advisory Board to maintain an atmosphere of constant improvement, and strive to keep the evaluation criteria representative of the advancing technology and techniques.

**Appendix A**  
**NWS**  
**Amarillo County Warning Area (CWA)**

The Amarillo office of the NWS serves the following counties in the Texas & Oklahoma Panhandles:

Armstrong, TX	Hutchinson, TX	Beaver, OK
Carson, TX	Lipscomb, TX	Cimarron, OK
Collingsworth, TX	Moore, TX	Texas, OK
Dallam, TX	Ochiltree, TX	
Deaf Smith, TX	Oldham, TX	
Donley, TX	Potter, TX	
Gray, TX	Randall, TX	
Hansford, TX	Roberts, TX	
Hartley, TX	Sherman, TX	
Hemphill, TX	Wheeler, TX	

## Appendix B

### Amarillo StormReady Advisory Board Members

<p>Steve Drillette Warning Coordination Meteorologist National Weather Service 1900 English Rd. Amarillo, TX 79108</p> <p>Phone: 806-335-1121 Fax: 806-335-3118 e-mail: <a href="mailto:steve.drillette@noaa.gov">steve.drillette@noaa.gov</a></p>	<p>Jose Garcia Meteorologist in Charge National Weather Service 1900 English Rd. Amarillo, TX 79108</p> <p>Phone: 806-335-1121 Fax: 806-335-3118 e-mail: <a href="mailto:jose.garcia@noaa.gov">jose.garcia@noaa.gov</a></p>
<p>Steve Reddish (Scott Bonner may act as proxy for Steve) Regional Liaison Officer Texas Department of Public Safety P.O. Box 420 Lubbock, TX 78408-4491</p> <p>Phone: 806-472-2820 Fax: 806-472-2849 e-mail: <a href="mailto:steve.reddish@txdps.state.tx.us">steve.reddish@txdps.state.tx.us</a></p>	<p>Walt Kelley Emergency Manager Coordinator Amarillo, Potter / Randall Counties 509 S.E. 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue P.O. Box 1971 Amarillo, TX 79105-1971</p> <p>Phone: 806-378-3022 Fax: 806-378-9366 e-mail: <a href="mailto:Walt.Kelley@ci.amarillo.tx.us">Walt.Kelley@ci.amarillo.tx.us</a></p>
<p>Ron Hill, Deputy Director State Department of Civil Emergency Management P.O. Box 53365 Oklahoma City, OK 73152</p> <p>Phone: 405-521-2481 Fax: 405-521-4053 e-mail: <a href="mailto:ron.hill@oklaosf.state.ok.us">ron.hill@oklaosf.state.ok.us</a></p>	<p>K.D. Shook Emergency Manager Director - Beaver County 111 West 2<sup>nd</sup> St. P.O. Box 786 Beaver, OK 73932</p> <p>Phone: 580-651-9166 or 580-625-3498 Fax: 580-625-3745 e-mail: <a href="mailto:drsnake@ptsi.net">drsnake@ptsi.net</a></p>
<p>Scott Bonner (Designated proxy for Steve Reddish) Pantex Emergency Management Planning Officer (DPS) P.O. Box 31690 Amarillo, TX 79120</p> <p>Phone: 806-477-5783 Fax: (same as above) Pager: 800-299-4099 pin# 6537 e-mail: <a href="mailto:dpsptx@arn.net">dpsptx@arn.net</a></p>	<p>Raymond Brady Moore County Emergency Manager P.O. Box 438 Dumas, TX 79029</p> <p>Phone: 806-934-9520 Fax: 806-935-0730 Pager: 806-934-6832 e-mail: <a href="mailto:rbrady@xit.net">rbrady@xit.net</a></p>

## Appendix C

### StormReady Population-Based Criteria

Since the tax base typically dictates the resources applied to public programs, the criteria for successful participation in the StormReady Program are based on population. Although subject to later refinement, four population categories will be used for developing appropriate accreditation criteria related to weather disaster preparedness. The population-based categories are:

Criteria	Population			
	< 2,500	2,500 - 14,999	15,000 - 40,000	> 40,000
<b>Criterion 1: Communications</b>				
24 hr Warning Point (WP)	(X)	X	X	X
Emergency Operations Center		X	X	X
Ability to relay real-time storm reports to Forecast Office	X	X	X	X
<b>Criterion 2: NWS Information Reception</b>	3	4	4	4
<b>Criterion 3: Hydrometeorological Monitoring</b>	1	2	3	4
<b>Criterion 4: Local Warning Dissemination</b>	1	2	3	4
* NWR - SAME receivers in local public facilities	X	X	X	X
<b>Criterion 5: Community Preparedness</b>				
Number of annual weather safety talks	1	2	3	4
Spotters and dispatchers trained biannually	X	X	X	X
Host / co-host annual NWS spotter training				X
<b>Criterion 6: Administrative</b>				
Formal hazardous weather operations plan	X	X	X	X
Biannual visits by emergency manager to NWS office	X	X	X	X
Annual visits by NWS official to community	X	X	X	X

Key: X - required

(X) - Must have a local WP or be part of a county network

\* - where NWR reception is possible. A "grandfather clause" exists for communities where a public alert system, similar to NWR, is in place and established before the advent of the SAME technology. The in-place alert system must, at a minimum, alert citizens of all NWS convective warnings.

## **Appendix C**

### **StormReady Criteria**

#### **(Continued)**

#### ***Criterion 1: Communications & Coordination Center***

The key to disaster management is effective communication. This is especially true in weather emergencies where rapid changes may permit only short lead-time warnings that require an immediate, educated response.

1. 24-Hour Warning Point. To receive accreditation under the StormReady Program, an applying agency will need to have a 24-hour warning point that can receive NWS information and provide local reports and advice. The warning point does not necessarily have to be a designated location or a permanent facility, but must be able to meet the criteria listed below:

- ▶ 24 hour access and operations capability.
- ▶ Warning reception capability.
- ▶ Warning dissemination capability.
- ▶ Ability and authority to activate local warning system(s).

2. Emergency Operations Center. Agencies serving jurisdictions larger than 2,500 people will need an emergency operations center (EOC). The EOC will need to be staffed during hazardous weather events and, when staffed, would assume the warning point's hazardous weather functions. The following summarizes the weather-related roles of an EOC:

- ▶ Assumes weather-related duties of warning point, when staffed.
- ▶ Activated based on predetermined guidelines related to NWS information and/or weather events.
- ▶ Staffed with emergency management director or designee.
- ▶ Warning reception capability.
- ▶ Ability and authority to activate local warning system(s). Must have capabilities equal to or better than the warning point.
- ▶ Ability to communicate with adjacent EOCs/Warning Points.
- ▶ Established communications link with NWS to relay real time weather information to support the warning decision making process.

The redundant capabilities of a warning point and an EOC provide backup potential between the two. When a disaster strikes, the EOC can function as the focus for recovery operations.

### **Criterion 2: National Weather Service Warning Reception**

Warning points and EOCs each need multiple ways to receive NWS warnings. The StormReady Program criteria for receiving NWS warnings in an EOC/WP require a combination of the following, based on population (see Appendix A):

- ▶ NOAA Weather Radio receiver with Specific Area Message Encoding (NWR-SAME): *Required for accreditation, if within range of transmitter. See Grandfather Clause on page 14.*
- ▶ NOAA Weather Wire drop: Satellite downlink data feed from NWS.
- ▶ Emergency Management Weather Information Network (EMWIN) receiver: Satellite feed and/or VHF radio transmission of NWS products.
- ▶ Statewide law enforcement telecommunications: Automatic relay of NWS products on law enforcement systems.
- ▶ Amateur Radio transceiver: Potential communications directly to NWS office
- ▶ Pagers: From a provider not directly tied to a local system such as EMWIN.
- ▶ Television: Local network or cable TV.
- ▶ Local Radio (Emergency Alert System - LP1/LP2).
- ▶ Other: For example, active participation in a state-run warning network.
- ▶ National Warning System (NAWAS) drop: FEMA-controlled civil defense hotline. NAWAS is presently limited in its use and is slated to be eliminated soon.

### **Criterion 3: Hydrometeorological Monitoring**

While receipt of warnings is crucial to the success of any EOC or warning point, there should also be a means of monitoring weather information, especially radar data. To obtain StormReady Program accreditation, each EOC/WP (based on population) should have some combination of the following recommended means of gathering ancillary weather information:

- ▶ Oklahoma's First-response Information Resource System using Telecommunications (OK-FIRST) or similar state-supported radar data acquisition system.
- ▶ Locally owned and operated weather radar.
- ▶ Local network or cable TV.
- ▶ Dedicated radar data feed from NEXRAD vendor or local TV station.
- ▶ Internet access to radar data.
- ▶ Instruments to provide a measure of local conditions and/or hydrologic conditions (cannot be the sole means of hydrometeorological monitoring).



#### ***Criterion 4: Warning Dissemination***

Once NWS warnings are received, or local information suggests an imminent weather threat, the goal of the local emergency officials should be to communicate with as much of the population as possible. Receiving StormReady accreditation will be contingent upon having one or more of the following means of ensuring timely warning dissemination to citizens (based on population):

- ▶ Outdoor warning sirens.
- ▶ Cable television audio/video overrides.
- ▶ Other locally-controlled methods like a local broadcast system or sirens on emergency vehicles.
- ▶ A community program that subsidizes the purchase of NWR-SAME receivers, provided a NOAA Weather Radio signal can be received.
- ▶ At least one NWR-SAME receiver in each local government building that is accessed by the public, such as hospitals and administrative buildings (provided a signal can be received). It is recommended that all schools be equipped with a NWR-SAME receiver as well. Local ordinances are recommended to ensure this.
- ▶ *Counties Only:* A County-wide communications network that ensures the flow of information between all cities and towns within its borders. This would include acting as a warning point for the smaller towns.

#### ***Criterion 5: Preparedness***

Public education is vital in preparing citizens to respond properly to weather threats. An educated public most likely will take steps to receive weather warnings, recognize potentially threatening weather situations, and act appropriately to those situations. Agencies seeking accreditation in the StormReady Program will need to:

- ▶ Conduct or facilitate safety talks for schools, hospitals, nursing homes and industries (number of talks per year will be based on population).
- ▶ Accomplish weather-related safety campaigns which include publicity for NOAA Weather Radios where coverage exists.

### ***Criterion 6: Administrative***

No program can be successful without formal planning and proactive administration. To be accredited in the StormReady Program:

Approved hazardous weather action plans will need to be in place. These plans will need to address, at a minimum, the following:

- Warning point procedures.
- EOC activation and procedures.
- Storm spotter activation criteria.
- Storm spotter roster and training record.
- Criteria for activation of sirens, cable television override, and/or local systems activation.
- Annual exercises.

EOC/warning point staff and field personnel will need to attend NWS storm spotter training sessions at least every other year. All jurisdictions larger than 40,000 people will need to host/co-host a spotter training session every year.

To facilitate close working relationships, the community/county program leader will need to visit the supporting NWS office at least every other year. NWS officials will commit to visit accredited counties, cities, and towns annually to tour EOCs/warning points and meet with key officials.